

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Office Action dated June 30, 2004 regarding the above-identified application, and the claim amendments above together with the remarks that follow are presented in a bona fide effort to respond thereto and address all issues raised in that Action. Claims 2, 10 and 16 have been recast in independent form to more clearly distinguish over applied art. The original independent claims and several dependent claims have been cancelled, to reduce issues. Additional amendments have been made to several of the remaining claims, to improve clarity. New claims 18 and 19 are presented to provide additional patentable claim coverage. Specific distinctions over the art are discussed in the traversal of the art rejection, however, it is believed that other revised claim language is at least no narrower than corresponding language of the original claims. Care has been taken to avoid entry of new matter.

Claims 2-4, 6, 7, 10-13 and 15-19 are active in this amended application. For reasons discussed below, it is believed that all of those claims patentably distinguish over the art and are in condition for allowance. Prompt favorable reconsideration of this amended application is requested.

Original claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over published Japanese application 11-219466 (hereinafter the '466 document) in combination with U.S. application publication number 2003/0007625 to Pines et al. (hereinafter Pines). The rejection is traversed with respect to the remaining claims.

The '466 document discloses a technique for transmitting maintenance and operational information regarding an ATM to a maintenance center. Pines discloses a system for routing directory assistance calls to two or more call centers. A primary call center 16 routes calls to another such center 16'. The selection of a call center may be based on time of day/time zone of the center (paragraph [0062]) and/or a language preference code (paragraph [0075]).

Independent claim 2 requires storing machine knowledge levels of operators at the call centers. The controller selects a call center to handle an inquiry based on a correspondence of machine number and an inquiry type to stored machine knowledge level of an operator. The rejection does not identify any teaching from the '466 document or Pines to base a selection of one of the call centers on stored machine knowledge level of an operator, and it is believed that such a teaching is absent from the two applied documents. Any combination of the '466 document and Pines therefore would fail to meet the storage and selection requirements of independent claim 2.

Since the combination applied in the rejection does not meet all of the limitations of independent claim 2, claim 2 should be patentable over that combination. Dependent claims 3 and 4 should be patentable over the art for at least the same reasons.

Claim 3 also recites a distinction over the '466 document and Pines. Claim 3 recites that the monitoring apparatus includes counting means for counting access frequencies to the operators of the call centers, for each operator. Information is sent to the operator having an access frequency at a predetermined value, and a stored count frequency is reset when the access frequencies of a plurality of operators reach a predetermined value. It is respectfully submitted that the '466 document and Pines both fail to teach this operator selection based on access frequencies.

In claim 10, the first storage means stores a machine knowledge level for each operator, and the second storage means stores run information received from the automated teller machine. The selection of the call center is based on correspondence of the machine knowledge level for the operator to the run information stored in said second storage means. It is not seen where either the '466 document or the Pine publication disclose selection of a call center based on such correspondence, and the explanation of the art rejection failed to identify such a teaching. It is respectfully submitted that the combination of the '466 document or the Pine publication would not

meet all of the limitations of independent claim 10. Claim 10 and its dependent claims (6, 7 and 11-13) therefore distinguish over the applied documents and should be in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 16 recites that the inquiry information includes a machine number of the automated teller machine and an inquiry type, and the controller searches for one of the operators who has a machine knowledge level corresponding to the machine number and the inquiry type. Neither applied document teaches this search function. Hence, the combination of the '466 document and the Pine publication would not meet all of the limitations of the independent claim. Claim 16 and dependent claim 17 therefore should be patentable over the applied documents

New claim 18 is an apparatus claim. In this claim, the controller selects one of the call centers to which to transmit the information received from the automated teller machine, based on correspondence of the machine information of the automated teller machine to a stored machine knowledge level of an operator at the selected call center. It is respectfully submitted that this new claim is patentable over the applied documents, because neither the '466 document nor Pine teaches selection of a call center based on such a correspondence of machine information to stored machine knowledge level of an operator.

New claim 19 is a method claim. The method involves searching machine knowledge levels of operators at the call centers to select a call center based on correspondence of either the machine information of the automated teller machine or the received inquiry information to a stored machine knowledge level of an operator at the selected call center. Received inquiry information or fault declaration information is then sent to the selected call center. It is respectfully submitted that this new claim is patentable over the applied document because neither the '466 document nor Pine teaches the claimed search and selection.

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Upon entry of the above claim amendments and reconsideration in light of the discussion above, all of the claims pending in this application should be patentable over the art applied in the Action. Accordingly, this case should now be ready to pass to issue; and Applicants respectfully request a prompt favorable reconsideration of this matter.

It is believed that this response addresses all issues raised in the June 30, 2004 Office Action. However, if any further issue should arise that may be addressed in an interview or obviated by an Examiner's amendment, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' representative at the number shown below.

To the extent necessary, if any, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith E. George", is written over the printed name.

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